



# UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
United States Patent and Trademark Office  
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450  
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
-----------------	-------------	----------------------	---------------------	------------------

10/646,150

08/22/2003

Sheldon H. Foss JR.

03001.1020

8917

35856

7590

01/16/2009

SMITH FROHWEIN TEMPEL GREENLEE BLAHA, LLC

Two Ravinia Drive

Suite 700

ATLANTA, GA 30346

EXAMINER

ROSEN, ELIZABETH H

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3692

MAIL DATE

DELIVERY MODE

01/16/2009

PAPER

**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	<b>Application No.</b> 10/646,150	<b>Applicant(s)</b> FOSS ET AL.	
	<b>Examiner</b> ELIZABETH ROSEN	<b>Art Unit</b> 3692	

**-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --**

### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

### Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 20 October 2008.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**.                      2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-6,8-11,13 and 15-23 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-6,8-11,13 and 15-23 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 22 August 2003 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All    b) ☐ Some \*    c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

### Attachment(s)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)                     | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)           |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____                                      |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)          | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____  | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____                          |

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Status of Claims***

1. This action is in reply to the Amendment and Response filed on October 20, 2008.
2. Claims 1-6, 8-11, 13, 15, and 17-23 have been amended.
3. Claims 7, 12, and 14 have been canceled.
4. Claims 1-6, 8-11, 13, and 15-23 are currently pending and have been examined.

### ***Previous Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112***

5. The previous rejection of Claim 10 under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph is withdrawn in light of Applicant's amendments.
6. The previous rejections of Claims 3, 8-11, 13, 17, and 23 under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph are withdrawn in light of Applicant's amendments.

### ***Response to Arguments***

7. The Examiner has pointed out particular references contained in the prior art of record within the body of this action for the convenience of the Applicant. Although the specified citations are representative of the teachings in the art and are applied to the specific limitations within the individual claim, other passages and figures may apply. Applicant, in preparing the response, should consider fully the entire reference as potentially teaching all or part of the claimed invention, as well as the context of the passage as taught by the prior art or disclosed by the Examiner.
8. Examiner would like to point out that the Supreme Court in *KSR International Co. v. Teleflex Inc.* described seven rationales to support rejections under 35 U.S.C. 103:
  - Combining prior art elements according to known methods to yield predictable results;
  - Simple substitution of one known element for another to obtain predictable results;
  - Use of known technique to improve similar devices (methods, or products) in the same way;
  - Applying a known technique to a known device (method, or product) ready for improvement to yield predictable results;
  - "Obvious to try" –choosing from a finite number of identified, predictable solutions, with a reasonable expectation of success;

- Known work in one field of endeavor may prompt variations of it for use in either the same field or a different one based on design incentives or other market forces if the variations would have been predictable to one of ordinary skill in the art; and
- Some teaching, suggestion, or motivation in the prior art that would have led one of ordinary skill to modify the prior art reference or to combine prior art reference teachings to arrive at the claimed invention.

Prior art is not limited just to the references being applied, but includes the understanding of one of ordinary skill in the art. The prior art reference (or references when combined) need not teach or suggest all the claim limitations; however, Office personnel must explain why the difference(s) between the prior art and the claimed invention would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art. The “mere existence of differences between the prior art and an invention does not establish the invention’s nonobviousness.” see *Dann v. Johnson*, 425 U.S. 219, 230 (1976).

9. The rejections under 35 U.S.C. 101 stand because Applicant’s amendments are new matter because the specification does not include a computer. Furthermore, for example, amended Claim 1 includes a processor and memory, but the various “components” are not shown to be part of a computer or machine. Claim 11, for example, includes steps that are not performed on a computer or machine. It appears that these steps are performed manually.

10. Applicant’s arguments regarding the rejections under 35 U.S.C. 103 are moot in light of the new grounds of rejection that were necessitated by Applicant’s amendments to the claims.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101***

11. 35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

12. **Claims 1-6, 8-10, and 21-23** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because they are directed to non-statutory subject matter. Claims directed to an Apparatus must be distinguished from the prior art in terms of structure rather than function, *In re Danly* 263 F.2d 844, 847, 120 USPQ 582, 531 (CCPA 1959). A claim containing a “recitation with respect to the manner in which a claimed apparatus is intended to be employed does not differentiate the claimed apparatus from a prior art apparatus” if the prior art apparatus teaches all the structural limitations of the claim. *Ex parte Masham*, 2 USPQ2d 1657 (bd Pat. App. & Inter. 1987). The specification does not include any description of a computer, processor, or memory. Therefore, these claims are code per-se and are not statutory.

13. **Claims 11, 13, and 15-20** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because they are directed to non-statutory subject matter. Based on Supreme Court precedent, a claim must (1) be tied to another statutory class of invention (such as a particular apparatus) (see at least *Diamond v. Diehr*, 450 U.S. 175, 184 (1981); *Parker v. Flook*, 437 U.S. 584, 588 n.9 (1978); *Gottschalk v. Benson*, 409 U.S. 63, 70 (1972); *Cochrane v. Deener*, 94 U.S. 780, 787-88 (1876)) or (2) transform underlying subject matter (such as an article or materials) to a different state or thing (see at least *Gottschalk v. Benson*, 409 U.S. 63, 71 (1972)). A claim that fails to meet one of the above requirements is not in compliance with the statutory requirements of 35 U.S.C. 101 for patent eligible subject matter. Here the claims fails to meet the above requirements because the limitations are neither tied to another statutory class of invention (such as a particular apparatus) nor physically transform underlying subject matter (such as an article or materials) to a different state or thing.

### ***Claim Objections***

14. **Claims 4 and 11** are objected to because of the following informalities: Typographical errors as follows: Claim 4 includes "examine a account behavior" and Claim 11 includes "at least one the existing financial accounts." Appropriate correction is required.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112***

15. The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

16. **Claims 1-6, 8-11, 13, and 15-23** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. The claim(s) contains subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention. These claims have been amended to include a computer (processor and memory). However, the specification does not include any description of the claimed invention being performed on a computer or machine.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

17. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

18. **Claims 1-6, 8-10, and 21-23** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over **Sanchez** et al., U.S. Patent Application Publication Number 2002/0188533 A1 in view of **Spitz** et al., U.S. Patent Application Publication Number 2002/0139837 A1, and further in view of **Quittner**, 1996.

**Claim 1:**

**Sanchez** discloses the limitations of:

- a processor (see at least Sanchez, Paragraphs 0060 and 0064);
- a memory accessible by the processor and comprising one or more processor-executable computer programs for establishing a new financial account and managing a plurality of existing financial accounts (see at least Sanchez, Paragraphs 0060 and 0064);
- a data collection component, wherein said data collection component is operable to receive account option data and account formation data pertaining to a new customer (see at least Sanchez, Paragraph 0026 ("According to one aspect of the invention, system 1000 may allow financial account provider 1200 to identify specific target customers to receive an offer for a Start Good Stay Good (SGSG) financial account consistent with certain principles related to the present invention (Step 210). To identify a target customer, system 1000 may allow financial account provider 1200 to access central database 1300 to obtain financial account information associated with potential customers. The financial account information may include, for example, financial account data for customers of financial account provider 1200, such as account numbers and account parameters for each credit line associated with a customer. ... A potential customer may be an individual who may not have a financial account with financial account provider 1200, but may be targeted as an individual whom financial account provider 1200 may want to offer a SGSG credit card product."));
- a decision engine operable to qualify the new customer for a new financial account based at least in part on said formation data and said account option

data (see at least Sanchez, Paragraph 0027 (“System 1000 may utilize the information included in central database 1300 to identify the target customers to extend offers for a SGSG financial account. For example, system 1000 may allow financial account provider 1200 to target customers with a propensity to mismanage funds (e.g., carry a high balance, have declared bankruptcy, etc.). Alternatively, financial account provider 1200 may target customers who have a history of making timely payments, have a high income, etc.)) and Paragraph 0029 (“In one configuration consistent with criteria principles related to the present invention, financial account provider 1200 may generate an offer to a target customer based on the financial risk associated with that customer.”));

- an account creation component operable to establish the new financial account for the qualified customer based at least in part on the account option data and account formation data (see at least Sanchez, Figure 3, Item 320 and Paragraph 0037 (“Once it receives their response, financial account provider 1200 may create a SGSG account associated with the customer in central database 1300 (Step 320).”)); and
- an account management component operable to perform periodic account management and maintenance of said new financial account and a plurality of existing financial accounts (see at least Sanchez, Figure 4 and Paragraph 0038 (“The SGSG tracking process may be performed by financial account provider 1200 for each SGSG account stored in central database 1300. The tracking process may begin by financial account provider 1200 determining whether a payment associated with a customer’s account is due (Step 405). ... Once a payment is due (Step 405: YES), financial account provider 1200 determines whether a payment has been received (Step 410). System 1000 may also allow financial account provider 1200 to determine whether the payment meets certain criteria, such as whether the payment amount equals or exceeds the amount due.”)).

**Sanchez** does not disclose, but **Spitz**, however, does disclose:

- a transactional processing component operable to receive transactions and clear the transactions against the new financial account and the plurality of existing financial accounts (see at least Spitz, Paragraph 0033).

It would have been prima facie obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to incorporate Spitz’s method of clearing transactions with Sanchez’s methods and systems for managing financial accounts having adjustable account parameters. One

of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to incorporate this feature because it is essential to clear transactions relating to a financial account. Furthermore, Sanchez discloses, in Paragraph 0023 that “website response vehicle 1110 may handle Internet related communications, such as web based transactions, between customer 1010 and financial account provider 1200.” and in Paragraph 0038 that “[o]nce a payment is due (Step 405: YES), financial account provider 1200 determines whether a payment has been received (Step 410). System 1000 may also allow financial account provider 1200 to determine whether the payment meets certain criteria, such as whether the payment amount equals or exceeds the amount due.” Therefore, based on the disclosure in Sanchez, it would be obvious that the system would clear transactions.

**Sanchez** discloses:

- “Furthermore, the financial account provider 1200 may adjust a customer’s financial risk value based [on] the customer’s progress in satisfying the payment criteria associated with a SGSG financial account. For example, a customer may be provided a SGSG financial account with parameters that are defined based on the credit risk of the customer (e.g., an initial interest rate of 20% and credit limit of \$500). After a predetermined amount of time, financial account provider 1200 may re-evaluate the customer’s credit risk and make adjustments to the account parameters based on a monitored progress of the customer satisfying criteria associated with the financial account (e.g., making consecutive timely proper payments). These adjustments may be in addition to adjustments previously made to the account’s parameters based on proper payments. For example, suppose the customer made proper payments to the account for 12 consecutive months. During these 12 months, the interest rate for the account may have been reduced to 14% and the credit limit increased to \$1,000 based on the consecutive timely payments made by the customer. Based on the customer’s progress during the previous 12 months, financial account provider 1200 may determine that the customer is less of a financial risk compared to when the customer initially obtained the financial account.” (Sanchez, Paragraph 0061).

**Sanchez** does not explicitly disclose, but **Quittner**, however, does disclose:

- a data aggregation module coupled with the account management component, the transactional processing component, and the decision engine, the data aggregation module configured to aggregate data associated with the transactions and provide feedback information to the decision engine and the



account management component (see at least Quittner (Rises in delinquencies are causing credit card issuers to change their underwriting criteria for new cards and further credit for existing customers.)).

Sanchez discloses, in at least Paragraph 0061, that a customer's financial risk value may be adjusted based on account and transaction information. Consequently, the account parameters may be adjusted. Quittner discloses that changes can be made to underwriting criteria for new credit cards and more credit based on account behavior of account holders on a whole. Quittner explains that rises in delinquencies and chargeoffs are causing credit card issuers to change credit scoring formulas and making it more difficult to open a new credit card account. It would have been prima facie obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to incorporate Quittner's method of changing underwriting criteria based on aggregated account holder activity with Sanchez's methods and systems for managing financial accounts having adjustable account parameters. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to incorporate this feature for the purpose of adjusting the standard for receiving credit based on the market. For example, if customers are not making payments and are defaulting, companies would require higher credit scores and better risk values before extending credit. They may also increase interest rates in order to recoup their losses. On the other hand, if customers are making timely payments, companies would make it easier to qualify for credit, increase credit limits, and decrease interest rates.

**Claim 2:**

**Sanchez** further discloses:

- wherein said decision engine further comprises an underwriting component operable to apply qualification criteria to qualify the new customers for the new financial account (see at least Sanchez, Paragraph 0027 ("System 1000 may utilize the information included in central database 1300 to identify the target customers to extend offers for a SGSG financial account. For example, system 1000 may allow financial account provider 1200 to target customers with a propensity to mismanage funds (e.g., carry a high balance, have declared bankruptcy, etc.). Alternatively, financial account provider 1200 may target customers who have a history of making timely payments, have a high income, etc.)) and Paragraph 0029 ("In one configuration consistent with criteria principles related to the present invention, financial account provider 1200 may

generate an offer to a target customer based on the financial risk associated with that customer.”)).

**Claim 3:**

**Sanchez** further discloses:

- wherein said decision engine further comprises at least one risk model coupled to said underwriting component and said account management component and operable to model risks associated with said new financial account and associated with said qualification criteria (see at least Sanchez, Figure 4 and Paragraphs 0039-0044 (Based on payment activity by the account holder, account parameters may be adjusted (e.g., interest rate, fees, credit limit, account termination))).

**Claim 4:**

**Sanchez** further discloses:

- wherein said account management component further comprises an account behavior component operable to examine a account behavior associated with the new financial account and the plurality of existing financial accounts (see at least Sanchez, Figure 4 and Paragraph 0038 (“The SGSG tracking process may be performed by financial account provider 1200 for each SGSG account stored in central database 1300. The tracking process may begin by financial account provider 1200 determining whether a payment associated with a customer’s account is due (Step 405). ... Once a payment is due (Step 405: YES), financial account provider 1200 determines whether a payment has been received (Step 410). System 1000 may also allow financial account provider 1200 to determine whether the payment meets certain criteria, such as whether the payment amount equals or exceeds the amount due.”)).

**Claim 5:**

**Sanchez** further discloses:

- said account management component is configured to alter parameters of either said new financial account or the existing financial accounts based on said feedback information (see at least Sanchez, Figure 4; Paragraph 0038 (“The SGSG tracking process may be performed by financial account provider 1200 for each SGSG account stored in central database 1300. The tracking process may

begin by financial account provider 1200 determining whether a payment associated with a customer's account is due (Step 405). ... Once a payment is due (Step 405: YES), financial account provider 1200 determines whether a payment has been received (Step 410). System 1000 may also allow financial account provider 1200 to determine whether the payment meets certain criteria, such as whether the payment amount equals or exceeds the amount due."); and Paragraphs 0039-0044 (Based on payment activity by the account holder, account parameters may be adjusted (e.g., interest rate, fees, credit limit, account termination))).

**Sanchez** does not disclose, but **Quittner**, however, does disclose:

- wherein said decision engine is configured to alter underwriting criteria based on said feedback information (see at least Quittner (Rises in delinquencies are causing credit card issuers to change their underwriting criteria for new cards and further credit for existing customers.)).

It would have been prima facie obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to incorporate Quittner's explanation that rises in delinquencies have caused credit card issuers to change their underwriting criteria both for new cards and for additional credit for existing customers with Sanchez's methods and systems for managing financial accounts having adjustable account parameters. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to incorporate this feature for the purpose of adjusting the standard for receiving credit based on the market. For example, if customers are not making payments and defaulting, companies would require higher credit scores and better risk values before extending credit. They may also increase interest rates in order to recoup their losses. On the other hand, if customers are making timely payments, companies would make it easier to qualify for credit, increase credit limits, and decrease interest rates.

**Claim 6:**

**Sanchez** further discloses:

- wherein said account behavior component further comprises a controller operable to enable and disable functions and privileges of said new financial account or the existing financial accounts based upon said aggregated data (see at least Sanchez, Figure 4; Paragraph 0038 ("The SGSG tracking process may be performed by financial account provider 1200 for each SGSG account stored in central database 1300. The tracking process may begin by financial account

provider 1200 determining whether a payment associated with a customer's account is due (Step 405). ... Once a payment is due (Step 405: YES), financial account provider 1200 determines whether a payment has been received (Step 410). System 1000 may also allow financial account provider 1200 to determine whether the payment meets certain criteria, such as whether the payment amount equals or exceeds the amount due."); and Paragraphs 0039-0044 (Based on payment activity by the account holder, account parameters may be adjusted (e.g., interest rate, fees, credit limit, account termination))).

**Claim 8:**

**Sanchez** further discloses:

- wherein said decision engine comprises an underwriting component operable to apply qualification criteria and at least one risk model coupled to said underwriting component and said account management component and associated with said qualification criteria operable to model risks associated with said new financial account or the existing financial accounts (see at least Sanchez, Figure 4; Paragraph 0027 ("System 1000 may utilize the information included in central database 1300 to identify the target customers to extend offers for a SGSG financial account. For example, system 1000 may allow financial account provider 1200 to target customers with a propensity to mismanage funds (e.g., carry a high balance, have declared bankruptcy, etc.). Alternatively, financial account provider 1200 may target customers who have a history of making timely payments, have a high income, etc.)); Paragraph 0029 ("In one configuration consistent with criteria principles related to the present invention, financial account provider 1200 may generate an offer to a target customer based on the financial risk associated with that customer."); and Paragraphs 0039-0044 (Based on payment activity by the account holder, account parameters may be adjusted (e.g., interest rate, fees, credit limit, account termination))).

**Claim 9:**

**Sanchez** does not disclose, but **Quittner**, however, does disclose:

- wherein said at least one risk model is coupled to said data aggregation module and said account behavior component, wherein said at least one risk model is operable to update risk models based upon said aggregated data and said

account behavior, whereby said qualification criteria is updated (see at least Quittner (Rises in delinquencies are causing credit card issuers to change their underwriting criteria for new cards and further credit for existing customers.)).

It would have been prima facie obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to incorporate Quittner's explanation that rises in delinquencies have caused credit card issuers to change their underwriting criteria both for new cards and for additional credit for existing customers with Sanchez's methods and systems for managing financial accounts having adjustable account parameters. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to incorporate this feature for the purpose of adjusting the standard for receiving credit based on the market. For example, if customers are not making payments and defaulting, companies would require higher credit scores and better risk values before extending credit. They may also increase interest rates in order to recoup their losses. On the other hand, if customers are making timely payments, companies would make it easier to qualify for credit, increase credit limits, and decrease interest rates.

**Claim 10:**

**Sanchez** further discloses:

- wherein said account management component comprises an account behavior component configured to alter a parameter related to operation of the new or existing financial accounts based upon said risk models (see at least Sanchez, Figure 4 and Paragraph 0046 (Based on account history and changes in a risk model, account details may be altered. For example, The floor value of the SGSG account's interest rate may be decreased or the credit limit may be increased. When these changes take place, the account will be managed according to the new specifications.)).

**Claim 21:**

**Sanchez** discloses the limitations of:

- a processor (see at least Sanchez, Paragraphs 0060 and 0064);
- a memory accessible by the processor and comprising one or more processor-executable computer programs for underwriting and establishing a new financial account managing a plurality of existing financial accounts (see at least Sanchez, Paragraphs 0060 and 0064);

- an account management component configured to manage a plurality of existing financial accounts (see at least Sanchez, Figure 4 and Paragraph 0038 (“The SGSG tracking process may be performed by financial account provider 1200 for each SGSG account stored in central database 1300. The tracking process may begin by financial account provider 1200 determining whether a payment associated with a customer’s account is due (Step 405). ... Once a payment is due (Step 405: YES), financial account provider 1200 determines whether a payment has been received (Step 410). System 1000 may also allow financial account provider 1200 to determine whether the payment meets certain criteria, such as whether the payment amount equals or exceeds the amount due.”));
- a data collection component configured to receive account information for a new financial account (see at least Sanchez, Paragraph 0026 (“According to one aspect of the invention, system 1000 may allow financial account provider 1200 to identify specific target customers to receive an offer for a Start Good Stay Good (SGSG) financial account consistent with certain principles related to the present invention (Step 210). To identify a target customer, system 1000 may allow financial account provider 1200 to access central database 1300 to obtain financial account information associated with potential customers. The financial account information may include, for example, financial account data for customers of financial account provider 1200, such as account numbers and account parameters for each credit line associated with a customer. ... A potential customer may be an individual who may not have a financial account with financial account provider 1200, but may be targeted as an individual whom financial account provider 1200 may want to offer a SGSG credit card product.”));
- a decision engine configured to qualify the new financial account based on underwriting criteria and the account information (see at least Sanchez, Paragraph 0027 (“System 1000 may utilize the information included in central database 1300 to identify the target customers to extend offers for a SGSG financial account. For example, system 1000 may allow financial account provider 1200 to target customers with a propensity to mismanage funds (e.g., carry a high balance, have declared bankruptcy, etc.). Alternatively, financial account provider 1200 may target customers who have a history of making timely payments, have a high income, etc.)) and Paragraph 0029 (“In one configuration consistent with criteria principles related to the present invention, financial

account provider 1200 may generate an offer to a target customer based on the financial risk associated with that customer.”)); and

- an account creation component configured to establish the qualified account based on the account information (see at least Sanchez, Figure 3, Item 320 and Paragraph 0037 (“Once it receives their response, financial account provider 1200 may create a SGSG account associated with the customer in central database 1300 (Step 320).”)).

**Sanchez** does not disclose, but **Spitz**, however, does disclose:

- a transactional processing component configured to process and monitor transactions between the plurality of existing financial accounts and a financial transaction network (see at least Spitz, Paragraph 0033).

It would have been prima facie obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to incorporate Spitz’s method of clearing transactions with Sanchez’s methods and systems for managing financial accounts having adjustable account parameters. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to incorporate this feature because it is essential to clear transactions relating to a financial account. Furthermore, Sanchez discloses, in Paragraph 0023 that “website response vehicle 1110 may handle Internet related communications, such as web based transactions, between customer 1010 and financial account provider 1200.” and in Paragraph 0038 that “[o]nce a payment is due (Step 405: YES), financial account provider 1200 determines whether a payment has been received (Step 410). System 1000 may also allow financial account provider 1200 to determine whether the payment meets certain criteria, such as whether the payment amount equals or exceeds the amount due.” Therefore, based on the disclosure in Sanchez, it would be obvious that the system would clear transactions.

**Sanchez** discloses:

- “Furthermore, the financial account provider 1200 may adjust a customer’s financial risk value based [on] the customer’s progress in satisfying the payment criteria associated with a SGSG financial account. For example, a customer may be provided a SGSG financial account with parameters that are defined based on the credit risk of the customer (e.g., an initial interest rate of 20% and credit limit of \$500). After a predetermined amount of time, financial account provider 1200 may re-evaluate the customer’s credit risk and make adjustments to the account parameters based on a monitored progress of the customer satisfying criteria associated with the financial account (e.g., making consecutive timely proper

payments). These adjustments may be in addition to adjustments previously made to the account's parameters based on proper payments. For example, suppose the customer made proper payments to the account for 12 consecutive months. During these 12 months, the interest rate for the account may have been reduced to 14% and the credit limit increased to \$1,000 based on the consecutive timely payments made by the customer. Based on the customer's progress during the previous 12 months, financial account provider 1200 may determine that the customer is less of a financial risk compared to when the customer initially obtained the financial account." (Sanchez, Paragraph 0061).

**Sanchez** does not explicitly disclose, but **Quittner**, however, does disclose:

- a data aggregation module in communication with the transactional processing component, the account management component, and the decision engine, the data aggregation module configured to process transaction data from the transactional processing component and provide feedback information to the account management component and the decision engine for altering the underwriting criteria for further new financial accounts and parameters of the existing financial accounts (see at least Quittner (Rises in delinquencies are causing credit card issuers to change their underwriting criteria for new cards and further credit for existing customers.)).

Sanchez discloses, in at least Paragraph 0061, that a customer's financial risk value may be adjusted based on account and transaction information. Consequently, the account parameters may be adjusted. Quittner discloses that changes can be made to underwriting criteria for new credit cards and more credit based on account behavior of account holders on a whole. Quittner explains that rises in delinquencies and chargeoffs are causing credit card issuers to change credit scoring formulas and making it more difficult to open a new credit card account. It would have been prima facie obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to incorporate Quittner's method of changing underwriting criteria based on aggregated account holder activity with Sanchez's methods and systems for managing financial accounts having adjustable account parameters. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to incorporate this feature for the purpose of adjusting the standard for receiving credit based on the market. For example, if customers are not making payments and are defaulting, companies would require higher credit scores and better risk values before extending credit. They may also increase interest rates in order to recoup their losses. On



the other hand, if customers are making timely payments, companies would make it easier to qualify for credit, increase credit limits, and decrease interest rates.

**Claim 22:**

**Sanchez** further discloses:

- the account management component is configured to alter parameters of the existing financial accounts based on the feedback information (see at least Sanchez, Figure 4; Paragraph 0038 (“The SGSG tracking process may be performed by financial account provider 1200 for each SGSG account stored in central database 1300. The tracking process may begin by financial account provider 1200 determining whether a payment associated with a customer’s account is due (Step 405). ... Once a payment is due (Step 405: YES), financial account provider 1200 determines whether a payment has been received (Step 410). System 1000 may also allow financial account provider 1200 to determine whether the payment meets certain criteria, such as whether the payment amount equals or exceeds the amount due.”); and Paragraphs 0039-0044 (Based on payment activity by the account holder, account parameters may be adjusted (e.g., interest rate, fees, credit limit, account termination))).

**Sanchez** does not disclose, but **Quittner**, however, does disclose:

- wherein the decision engine is configured to alter the underwriting criteria based on the feedback information (see at least Quittner (Rises in delinquencies are causing credit card issuers to change their underwriting criteria for new cards and further credit for existing customers.)).

It would have been prima facie obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to incorporate Quittner’s explanation that rises in delinquencies have caused credit card issuers to change their underwriting criteria both for new cards and for additional credit for existing customers with Sanchez’s methods and systems for managing financial accounts having adjustable account parameters. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to incorporate this feature for the purpose of adjusting the standard for receiving created based on the market. For example, if customers are not making payments and defaulting, companies would require higher credit scores and better risk values before extending credit. They may also increase interest rates in order to recoup their losses. On the other hand, if customers are making timely payments, companies would make it easier to qualify for credit, increase credit limits, and decrease interest rates.

**Claim 23:**

**Sanchez** does not disclose, but **Quittner**, however, does disclose:

- wherein the decision engine interfaces with a risk model which is updated based on the feedback information from the data aggregation module (see at least Quittner (Rises in delinquencies are causing credit card issuers to change their underwriting criteria for new cards and further credit for existing customers.)).

It would have been prima facie obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to incorporate Quittner's explanation that rises in delinquencies have caused credit card issuers to change their underwriting criteria both for new cards and for additional credit for existing customers with Sanchez's methods and systems for managing financial accounts having adjustable account parameters. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to incorporate this feature for the purpose of adjusting the standard for receiving credit based on the market. For example, if customers are not making payments and defaulting, companies would require higher credit scores and better risk values before extending credit. They may also increase interest rates in order to recoup their losses. On the other hand, if customers are making timely payments, companies would make it easier to qualify for credit, increase credit limits, and decrease interest rates.

19. **Claims 11, 13, and 15-19** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over **Sanchez et al.**, U.S. Patent Application Publication Number 2002/0188533 A1 in view of **Quittner**, 1996.

**Claim 11:**

**Sanchez** discloses:

- Modifying services provided to a customer based on aggregated transaction data from a customer's accounts. (see at least Sanchez, Figure 4; Paragraphs 0028-0029 (In one embodiment, "financial account provider 1200 may generate an offer to a target customer based on the financial risk associated with the customer." This financial risk can be based on a credit score or it may be based on "a customer's potential for making late payments and overcharging a financial account based on past payment history data." Information related to existing customer accounts is aggregated and then used to determine financial risk of the customer. Parameters, such as interest rate and credit limit, "may vary based on

the financial risk of the customer.")); Paragraph 0061 ("Furthermore, the financial account provider 1200 may adjust a customer's financial risk value based [on] the customer's progress in satisfying the payment criteria associated with a SGSG financial account. For example, a customer may be provided a SGSG financial account with parameters that are defined based on the credit risk of the customer (e.g., an initial interest rate of 20% and credit limit of \$500). After a predetermined amount of time, financial account provider 1200 may re-evaluate the customer's credit risk and make adjustments to the account parameters based on a monitored progress of the customer satisfying criteria associated with the financial account (e.g., making consecutive timely proper payments). These adjustments may be in addition to adjustments previously made to the account's parameters based on proper payments. For example, suppose the customer made proper payments to the account for 12 consecutive months. During these 12 months, the interest rate for the account may have been reduced to 14% and the credit limit increased to \$1,000 based on the consecutive timely payments made by the customer. Based on the customer's progress during the previous 12 months, financial account provider 1200 may determine that the customer is less of a financial risk compared to when the customer initially obtained the financial account.")).

**Sanchez** does not explicitly disclose:

- aggregating transaction data regarding a plurality of existing financial accounts via a financial transaction network;
- modifying services provided to a customer associated with at least one the existing financial accounts, via the financial transaction network, based on the aggregated transaction data; and
- modifying stored underwriting criteria for new financial accounts based on the aggregated transaction data.

**Sanchez** does not explicitly disclose, but **Quittner**, however, does disclose:

- Aggregated transaction data such as delinquencies and chargeoffs is used to modify services provided to a customer such as whether to provide more credit to a customer. This data is also used to modify underwriting criteria that is used for applicants.

Sanchez discloses, in at least Paragraph 0061, that a customer's financial risk value may be adjusted based on account and transaction information. Consequently, the account parameters may be adjusted. Quittner discloses that changes can be made to

underwriting criteria for new credit cards and more credit based on account behavior of account holders on a whole. Quittner explains that rises in delinquencies and chargeoffs are causing credit card issuers to change credit scoring formulas and making it more difficult to open a new credit card account. It would have been prima facie obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to incorporate Quittner's method of changing underwriting criteria based on aggregated account holder activity with Sanchez's methods and systems for managing financial accounts having adjustable account parameters. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to incorporate this feature for the purpose of adjusting the standard for receiving credit based on the market. For example, if customers are not making payments and are defaulting, companies would require higher credit scores and better risk values before extending credit. They may also increase interest rates in order to recoup their losses. On the other hand, if customers are making timely payments, companies would make it easier to qualify for credit, increase credit limits, and decrease interest rates.

**Claim 13:**

**Sanchez** further discloses:

- wherein a risk model is available (see at least Sanchez, Figure 4 and Paragraphs 0039-0044 (Based on payment activity by the account holder, account parameters may be adjusted (e.g., interest rate, fees, credit limit, account termination)); and
- running the risk model based at least in part on the aggregated transaction data (see at least Sanchez, Figure 4; Paragraph 0029 (Parameters, such as interest rate and credit limit, "may vary based on the financial risk of the customer."); and Paragraph 0061).

**Sanchez** does not disclose, but **Quittner**, however, does disclose:

- modifying the stored underwriting criteria based at least in part on the results of the risk model (see at least Quittner (Rises in delinquencies are causing credit card issuers to change their underwriting criteria for new cards and further credit for existing customers.)).

It would have been prima facie obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to incorporate Quittner's explanation that rises in delinquencies have caused credit card issuers to change their underwriting criteria both for new cards and for additional credit for existing customers with Sanchez's methods and systems for managing financial accounts having adjustable account parameters. One of ordinary skill

in the art would have been motivated to incorporate this feature for the purpose of adjusting the standard for receiving created based on the market. For example, if customers are not making payments and defaulting, companies would require higher credit scores and better risk values before extending credit. They may also increase interest rates in order to recoup their losses. On the other hand, if customers are making timely payments, companies would make it easier to qualify for credit, increase credit limits, and decrease interest rates.

**Claim 15:**

**Sanchez** does not disclose, but **Quittner**, however, does disclose:

- wherein the step of modifying the services comprises the step of modifying the stored underwriting criteria (see at least Quittner (Rises in delinquencies are causing credit card issuers to change their underwriting criteria for new cards and further credit for existing customers.)).

It would have been prima facie obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to incorporate Quittner's explanation that rises in delinquencies have caused credit card issuers to change their underwriting criteria both for new cards and for additional credit for existing customers with Sanchez's methods and systems for managing financial accounts having adjustable account parameters. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to incorporate this feature for the purpose of adjusting the standard for receiving created based on the market. For example, if customers are not making payments and defaulting, companies would require higher credit scores and better risk values before extending credit. They may also increase interest rates in order to recoup their losses. On the other hand, if customers are making timely payments, companies would make it easier to qualify for credit, increase credit limits, and decrease interest rates.

**Claim 16:**

**Sanchez** further discloses:

- wherein the step of modifying the services comprises the step of modifying the fees associated with services (see at least Sanchez, Paragraph 0057 (Fees may altered based on payments made by the customer.)).

**Claim 17:**

**Sanchez** further discloses:

- wherein the step of aggregating transaction data comprises the step of receiving transaction information regarding financial transactions associated with at least one of the existing financial accounts (see at least Sanchez, Paragraphs 0028-0029 (In one embodiment, “financial account provider 1200 may generate an offer to a target customer based on the financial risk associated with the customer.” This financial risk can be based on a credit score or it may be based on “a customer’s potential for making late payments and overcharging a financial account based on past payment history data.” Information related to existing customer accounts is aggregated and then used to determine financial risk of the customer.)).

**Claim 18:**

**Sanchez** further discloses:

- wherein the step of modifying the services comprises the step of modifying a line of credit associated with at least one of the existing financial accounts (see at least Sanchez, Figure 4; Paragraph 0029 (Parameters, such as interest rate and credit limit, “may vary based on the financial risk of the customer.”); and Paragraph 0061).

**Claim 19:**

**Sanchez** further discloses:

- wherein the step of modifying the services comprises the step of modifying restrictions on transactions for at least one of the existing financial accounts (see at least Sanchez, Figure 4; Paragraph 0029 (Parameters, such as interest rate and credit limit, “may vary based on the financial risk of the customer.”); and Paragraph 0061).

20. **Claim 20** is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over **Sanchez** et al., U.S. Patent Application Publication Number 2002/0188533 A1 in view of **Quittner**, 1996, and further in view of **O’Neil**, U.S. Patent Number 6,226,364 B1.

**Claim 20:**

**Sanchez** does not disclose, but **O’Neil**, however, does disclose:

- wherein the step of modifying the services comprises the step of temporarily disabling one or more services associated with at least one of the existing financial accounts (see at least O'Neil, column 1, lines 31-41 (When the customer is defaulting on payments, service is deactivated until the balance has been paid.)).

It would have been prima facie obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to incorporate O'Neil's method of deactivating an account until the balance is paid with Sanchez's methods and systems for managing financial accounts having adjustable account parameters. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to incorporate this feature for the purpose of preventing a customer from using an account when a balance is unpaid and increasing that balance. Furthermore, if an account is temporarily disabled, there will be a greater incentive for the customer to pay the balance.

### **Conclusion**

21. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Elizabeth Rosen whose telephone number is 571-270-1850. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday, 8:30 am-6:00 pm est, alt Fridays off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Kambiz Abdi can be reached at 571-272-6702. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either

Application/Control Number:  
10/646,150  
Art Unit: 3692

Page 23

Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Nga B. Nguyen/  
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3692